

Meeting Summary of the SANBAG Board of Directors

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■ Goods movement: A phenomenal challenge

One of SANBAG's largest hurdles is to reduce the impact of goods traveling through Southern California. The Southland pays a high price for serving as the west coast's premiere goods gateway through the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, and that price is poor air quality, heavy traffic congestion from inadequate infrastructure, rough roads and long delays at railroad crossings.



Ty Schuiling, SANBAG's Director of Planning and Programming, explained the toll that goods movement takes on the area and presented the results of an "elasticity study" that shows how future fees charged on incoming port containers could be used to offset infrastructure costs, while increasing port volumes.

See page 2 for a detailed look at the goods movement challenge in the area.

■ SANBAG seeks proposals for transportation study

A long-range transportation plan for the Victor Valley is another step closer as SANBAG seeks proposals from consultants to help with developing this plan. Proposals are due in November, and the study is expected to take about 18 months.

The study will identify future transportation needs, develop the size of needed roadways, establish right-of-way requirements, preserve new corridors and provide a technical basis for policies related to the prioritization of Measure I funds for Victor Valley projects. Adelanto, Apple Valley, Hesperia, Victorville, San Bernardino County and Caltrans will be involved in this cooperative planning effort.

■ Board says "Bravo" to Bair for 30 years at SANBAG

It was 1975, the era of wide ties and Gerald Ford, when Mike Bair joined SANBAG. The agency was only two years old at the time and Bair, a transplant from Ohio, came to help develop the first long-range transportation plan for San Bernardino County.

Now SANBAG's Director of Transit/Rail Programs, Bair was recognized by the Board of Directors for his 30 years of service. Past President Bill Postmus presented a mounted crystal train to Bair to thank him for his long-standing service to the agency. Kudos, Mike!



Mike Bair

■ Work to start on temporary Metrolink parking lot

Relief is on the way for Metrolink riders who struggle to find a parking spot at the station in San Bernardino.

SANBAG awarded a \$174,178 construction contract to Hillcrest Contracting of Corona to build a temporary parking lot west of Mt. Vernon Avenue. The new lot will provide 149 parking spaces, in addition to the 305 now available.

Work is expected to start in November and last about two months, said Valerie Timmins, who is managing the project for SANBAG.

"The new lot will make it much easier for Metrolink riders, because parking spaces are so scarce at the San Bernardino station," she said.

The land currently is used by Metrolink as an overnight train layover and material storage facility. Metrolink will continue this site for train storage, but the tracks where the trains are maintained will be fenced from the parking area.

The project also will involve installing fencing along the asphalt walkway that runs under the Mt. Vernon bridge and connects with the train station. Once completed, the City of San Bernardino will provide security and maintenance for the lot.

Down the road ...

- Oct. 12: Administrative Committee, 9 a.m.
- Oct. 13: Major Projects Committee, 9 a.m.
- Oct. 14: Grand Opening, Barstow Clean Air Fueling Station, 2 p.m.
- Oct. 19: Plans & Programs Committee, 12 noon
- Oct. 21: Mountain-Desert Committee, 9 a.m.
- Nov. 1: Ground-Breaking: I-10 Widening Project, Redlands, 11 a.m.

Container fees solution to goods movement challenge

Fees on San Pedro Bay cargo would fund infrastructure, improve efficiency

Critics long have maintained that if fees are charged for cargo entering the Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, then shippers would take their goods elsewhere, causing a loss of jobs in Southern California. A new study shows that the opposite is true: charging fees and using these fees for infrastructure improvements will make port travel more efficient, leading to a higher volume of cargo entering the ports and more job opportunities for Southern California.

"This is one of the most significant issues facing the transportation industry," said SANBAG Executive Director Norm King. "Solving or not solving this goods movement issue will make a tremendous impact — positive or negative — on our quality of life here in San Bernardino County and in Southern California."

Ty Schuiling, SANBAG's Director of Planning and Programming, presented the study results and explained the challenges that must be overcome and the steps that are being taken to improve the transport of goods through the region.

Conducted by Dr. Rob Leachman of UC Berkeley, the Port and Modal Elasticity Study found that San Pedro Bay cargo is more likely to be diverted to other seaports due to immense Southern California traffic congestion than from imposing modest container fees.

Goods Movement Challenges

The Ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach — and the connecting roadways and railways — handle 44% of the containerized imports for the nation. This flow of goods is expected to triple by 2025. Southern California roads and rail systems were not designed to accommodate this volume of port activity.

This infrastructure also was not intended to serve the sheer number of people in the Southland. The system was designed for a population of 15 million; the current population is nearly 18 million and should reach 23 million by 2030.

Daily truck traffic to and from the San Pedro Bay is projected to grow dramatically, too. In 2000, daily truck trips totaled 34,000. This number is likely to climb to 92,000 by 2020.

In addition, peak day train volumes on Union Pacific and Burlington Northern Santa Fe lines are expected to reach 265 trains per day along the Alameda Corridor East by 2010. By 2025, a total of 390 trains are projected to travel those same rail lines.

This increase in rail traffic will impact communities by creating longer delays and safety hazards at railroad crossings throughout the region.



SANBAG alone has identified close to 30 high priority rail crossings that require grade separation. Hundreds of these crossings need to be separated from streets all over the Southland.

Air quality also is degrading, due in large part to diesel particulates. Trucks, trains and ships are significant contributors to poor air quality, which increases the risk of cancer and compromises lung capacity, especially in young children.

Funding for infrastructure improvements is a major hurdle. A \$36 billion price tag is attached for total highway, rail and air quality improvements in Southern California.

Container Fees: A Solution

The Leachman Study found that charging a fee of up to \$200 for each 40-foot container that enters the Ports of L.A. and Long Beach would not cause shippers to divert their cargo to other ports, if the collected fees were used for infrastructure improvements. The freeway and railway upgrades would improve the efficiency and reliability of goods movement, making it more profitable for importers. Charging this fee actually would result in an increase in goods being shipped to the San Pedro Bay, thereby expanding jobs in the logistics sector.

Fees higher than \$200 per container would cause some diversion of goods and possibly affect jobs in the region.

To work, private sector contributions are essential, no one mode of transportation should pay more than its fair share and the cost to consumers should be minimized.

A number of coalitions are being formed and studies being undertaken to implement a plan for improving goods movement. A Freight Movement Executive Roundtable is meeting regularly, and a Multi-County Goods Movement Action Plan is being developed. These groups will use Leachman's elasticity study, SANBAG's Interstate 15 study, economist John Husing's findings about the importance of the logistics industry for the Inland Empire and other tools as they create policy during the coming year.